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PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHMO #5524 3301516  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 261516Z NOV 07  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5444  
INFO RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 2184  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0389

UNCLAS MOSCOW 005524

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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNGA](#) [IS](#) [RS](#)  
SUBJECT: RUSSIA WILL ABSTAIN ON UNGA RESOLUTIONS WITH  
ANTI-ISRAEL BIAS

REF: STATE 159386

(SBU) We delivered reftel points on November 23 to MFA Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa Oleg Ozerov and urged Russia to change its abstentions to "no" votes this year. Ozerov cited the GOR practice of abstaining on anti-Israel resolutions at UNGA and said that to begin opposing the resolutions at this time would appear inconsistent. He explained that the GOR preferred that UNGA resolutions dealing with the Middle East contain "less rhetoric, less focus on Israel," but noted that these resolutions have a "history that is very difficult to change." Many are drafted by the Palestinians, who have seen their economic situation deteriorate over the last two years while Israel's security situation has improved. Ozerov said that should the situation improve for the Palestinians the GOR and other governments could change their positions on anti-Israel resolutions.  
BURNS